

Senate Findings

# CIA's Attempts To Kill Castro

Washington

The Central Intelligence Agency made attempts to kill Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba during the administrations of three Presidents, Senator Frank Church (Dem-Idaho) disclosed yesterday.

The chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence said the committee has received evidence of actual attempts on Castro's life, as opposed to plans, in the administrations of Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson.

Church said it hadn't been established whether or not the Presidents involved knew of the assassination attempts.

This is the first time it has been stated publicly that the CIA may have tried to murder Castro as late as the Johnson era or during the latter part of the Eisenhower administration.

Over the past few months it has been confirmed in public comments by several sources that the CIA hatched one plot against Castro during the later Eisenhower

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report. Wait until you see the conflicting evidence as to who was told what. Even the director of the CIA didn't know what was going on for long periods of time, Church said.

During the time periods he mentioned, the CIA was directed successively by Allen Dulles, who died several years ago, John McCone, Vice Admiral William Raborn and, in 1966, Richard Helms. All three living former directors have been interviewed by the committee.

The 300-page report was first expected to be completed in August but may be delayed as late as early November. Among the causes of the delay, sources familiar with the investigation said Saturday, were new leads on whether Robert Kennedy ordered the assassination of Castro.

Robert Kennedy, then attorney general, was assigned by his brother to work on certain covert operations being planned by the CIA.

er years and that this plot was put into operation while Kennedy was in office. According to testimony in the committee's hands this plot involved an attempt to poison Castro with the aid of two members of the Mafia.

But under questioning on the ABC-TV panel show, "Issues and Answers," yesterday, Church said that when his committee's report on political assassinations is made public, "you will find both plots and attempts, and they span many years.

"They span the years from the Eisenhower administration through the Kennedy administration, and into the Johnson administration." He confirmed that there were actual attempts as well as plots during these administrations.

He said, however, that the committee still has not found conclusive evidence that any one of these Presidents ordered or even knew that the CIA was involved in an effort to kill the leader of a foreign nation. "We have no hard evidence that directly relates this activity to any order that was given by any president," he said.

He confirmed an earlier statement by Senator Walter Mondale (Dem-Minn.) that the CIA had formalized assassination planning under an "executive action group" that prepared proposals to kill foreign leaders.

Mondale also said both Richard Helms, former director of the CIA, and Richard Bissell, director of covert activities in the early 1960s, had testified that they had authority from a "higher level" to plot the assassinations.

Church said it strained "credulity" that the presidents did not know what was going on during these years.

"The whole thing strains credulity. Wait until you see the

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Meanwhile yesterday, William Colby, director of the CIA, said that it was his opinion "that there is no one in CIA who could be convicted of any crime. There were things that were done wrong, but they were either done because they were believed to be right or within the color of the law. There is justification for what they did.

"There are variations of these things, but I do not believe that any of our employees can be found actually guilty."

The congressional investigations of the CIA have uncovered a wide range of illegal activity including mail opening, burglaries, and violations of its charter. Several matters are under the investigation of the Department of Justice.